

REMARKS

I. Status of the Application

Claims 1-8 were pending this application prior to the submission of this Amendment. Claims 1 and 3-8 stand rejected. Claim 2 has been objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

With this Amendment, claims 1 and 7 have been amended. No new matter has been introduced by this Amendment. Claim 2 has been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

II. Response to Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1 and 3-8 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,343,188 to Morofuji (hereafter, "Morofuji").

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the pending claims in view of the amendments now presented herein. Claims 1 and 7 have been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 2, which was indicated as containing allowable subject matter by the Examiner.

Therefore, Applicant submits that independent claims 1 and 7, as amended, are distinguishable from Morofuji.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) is respectfully requested.

Applicant has chosen in the interest of expediting prosecution of this patent application to distinguish the cited documents from the pending claims as set forth above. However, these statements should not be regarded in any way as admissions that the cited documents are, in fact, prior art.

Applicant has not specifically addressed the rejections of the dependent claims because Applicant submits that the independent claims from which they respectively depend, either directly or indirectly, are in condition for allowance as set forth above. Accordingly, the dependent claims also are in condition for allowance. Applicant, however, reserves the right to address such rejections of the dependent claims should such be necessary.

Applicant believes that the application is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

Based on the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims and allowance of this application.

AUTHORIZATION

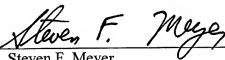
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for consideration of this Amendment to Deposit Account No. 13-4500, Order No. 1232-5229. A DUPLICATE OF THIS DOCUMENT IS ATTACHED.

In the event that an extension of time is required, or which may be required in addition to that requested in a petition for an extension of time, the Commissioner is requested to grant a petition for that extension of time which is required to make this response timely and is hereby authorized to charge any fee for such an extension of time or credit any overpayment for an extension of time to Deposit Account No 13-4500, Order No. 1232-5229. A DUPLICATE OF THIS DOCUMENT IS ATTACHED.

Respectfully submitted,
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Dated: June 18, 2008

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